

With another shortfall, we must again protect education from the worst of the cuts. I will be working with others to protect education with solutions like protecting levy equalization to keep our school districts on even footing and provide the best education possible to our kids. We will also be leveraging every federal dollar we can get our hands on while our state economy recovers.

Rainier School

The Rainier School is under attack. This is nothing new, as there have long been a number of people that have been trying to close the Rainier School because of an antiquated political belief that we are warehousing and institutionalizing people that would be happier in the community. You may have personal knowledge of the Rainier School and the folks who live there, and if so, you understand how absurd this idea is, and how dangerous closing this facility would be to those that live there.

A report came out in October that recommended closing the Rainier School by 2014. This was incorporated in the Governor’s proposed budget. Yet closing the school wouldn’t save money — it would cost taxpayers millions of dollars in the next few years.

I will, once again, continue the fight to keep the Rainier School open.

Lake Tapps

The final permit will be issued soon for Lake Tapps, and the only unfinished piece is an adaptive management plan, which will ensure that in years with too little water, adjustments will be made to protect the recreational levels in the lake. Right now, recreational levels have been designated as superior to the consumptive water right of the Cascade Water Alliance in the draft agreements.

This is a great success, and one that is a long time coming. I have been working on this since the beginning of the original Lake Tapps Task Force nearly 10 years ago, and soon we can all look forward to a solid agreement that will protect the rights of those who live on and use the lake. I will continue to keep a close eye on this process to ensure that the rights of the homeowners and the community remain on track.

In Conclusion

The focus in this session will be narrower than ever, primarily protecting public safety and education while writing a Supplemental Budget in the most challenging of economic times. However, if you have an issue or concern, it’s critically important that I hear from you and get a chance to listen to everyone who wants to share their views or concerns with me. If you are in Olympia during session, please feel free to stop in, and my Legislative Assistant will find me, as I always have time for constituents, no matter how busy things get.

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2010 PRE-SESSION REPORT

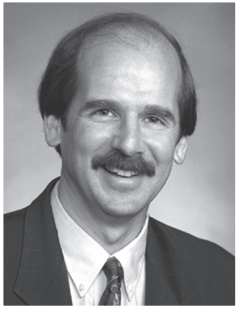
31st District Representative

Christopher HURST

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31st District Representative

2010 PRE-SESSION REPORT

Dear Neighbor,

Over the years I’ve written to you many times, and although we have faced challenges, there’s been nothing like this economic crisis in over a generation. Experts tell us this recession has ended and that we are in a long, slow recovery. However, this is little comfort to workers who’ve been laid off, homeowners worried about foreclosure or seniors trying to pay the bills.

For the second time in 25 years, a lack of oversight of our financial markets led to an economic meltdown. This time, it’s much worse. As we begin the long process of patching our economy back together we must realize that although it’s convenient and comfortable to assign blame, this was a societal problem, as well.

No nation, family, or business could continue to accumulate debt at such a rate and hope that real-estate values would climb at 30 percent a year to somehow re-pay that debt. This was a false hope. It was a false economy, and now we’re paying the price.

Much of the work with constituents that I have been doing recently has been helping folks get unemployment insurance or keep their homes. The consequences of home financing and mortgage scams have become all too real.

On a state level, this economic crisis led to an opportunity to restructure government, and gain efficiencies I’ve wanted to see for years. The realities of our budget are forcing overdue reforms in how Washington state does business.

Much progress was made in the 2009 legislative session, when we faced an \$9 billion shortfall. That work will continue in earnest when the legislature meets again in January. Inside this letter I’ll go into more detail of issues I’ll be working on based upon the input I’ve heard throughout the year from citizens in the 31st District.

Sincerely,

Christopher Hurst  
State Representative  
31st Legislative District



31st District Representative Christopher Hurst

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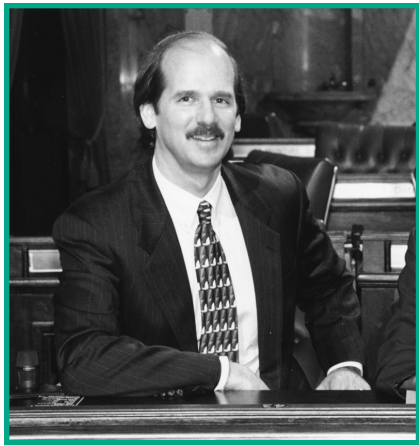
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Christopher  
**HURST**

**31st District  
Representative**

## 2010 PRE-SESSION REPORT

### A Time to Look Inward

I was very close to my grandparents and learned much from them. Their lives were forever altered during the Great Depression, and they never forgot what it was like to have hungry people come to your door. They believed that no one in need

should go unfed, and they carried that belief with them the rest of their lives.

Today, many around us are deeply in need. As government resources decrease, the safety net for those most in need grows thinner. The most basic challenge that any society faces is that no one goes hungry.

Every community in the 31<sup>st</sup> Legislative District either has a food bank or one close by. I have been organizing efforts in recent months to make sure that shelves are stocked in all of our local food banks. If you are able to help your neighbors in this way, please give my office a call, and we will direct you to your closest food bank.

All community charities are important, and it's heartening to see how citizens in our community respond when their neighbors are in need. We can all make sure that no one in the 31<sup>st</sup> District goes hungry. Want to help? Give us a call!

### A National Tragedy Too Close to Home

The random killing of five police officers in a single month, four of them on one occasion, has sent shockwaves through the very fabric of our society. As a 25-year police veteran myself, I am keenly aware of how this has impacted both law enforcement and citizens. Chris Monfort, who set fire to police cars and killed Seattle police officer Timothy Brenton, was nothing short of a domestic terrorist seeking the destabilization of our civilized way of life. Maurice Clemmons was a life-long career criminal who never should have been on the streets in the first place.

I'm the Chairman of the House Public Safety Committee which has jurisdiction over criminal laws. I will be holding hearings in January to examine these cases. I will see that any legislative changes that might prevent an event like the one in Lakewood will be passed into law this session. There are already many proposals, but my committee will make sure that we put all of the pieces of the puzzle together. We don't want to miss the big picture and allow any important information to slip through the cracks.

The public and media were quick to level significant criticism against Governor Huckabee of Arkansas, who granted clemency to Maurice Clemmons and allowed him to come to Washington state. Yet it's impossible to prevent bad decisions made by elected officials in other parts of the country. I've always had a problem with the concept of elected officials having the power to overturn the verdicts of judges and juries who made decisions

based upon *all* of the facts at the time that those cases were heard in court. If a person thinks their sentence is unfair, they always have the right to appeal it as being unjust or unconstitutional. Having an elected official make such a judgment on the spur of the moment is unwise.

What we can do in Washington state is keep these types of criminals from coming here in the first place. If they do make it here and violate our laws, they must be placed in custody as soon as possible and not set free.

Legislative action is just one piece of the puzzle. The point of both of these crimes was to terrorize law enforcement and the public they serve. This cannot happen. We must not allow the goals of these two cowardly individuals to disrupt our sense of safety and security. The day a law enforcement officer feels unsafe walking into a coffee shop with the public, we all lose something of great value. You can help by continuing to express your support and appreciation to policemen and women whenever you see them out in your community. I know that this means a lot to them.

### A Flood of Bad News

Earlier this year, we all heard the ominous news that the right abutment of the Howard Hanson Dam, which holds back the Green River during heavy rains, had become unsound and was leaking.

Over half of our state's economy would be immediately impacted by flooding in the Green River Valley. The warehouses and businesses support jobs, and even much the food we eat comes from distribution centers in the valley.

Although the dam is actually owned and operated by the federal government, the consequences of a dam failure would have catastrophic consequences. I immediately went to work to find a solution.

The Public Safety Committee also has oversight over the Military Department and emergency preparedness issues. A Cabinet-level work group, led by Adjutant General Lowenberg has been meeting each week, and I've been a member of this team since the beginning. We've made great progress in working with our federal delegation to develop and implement plans for flood prevention and a disaster response should flooding occur.

Earlier this year, there was a one in three chance of significant flooding. It was decided that an initial effort would involve repairing damage to the dam abutment prior to heavy rains beginning this fall. Workers toiled around the clock to put in temporary repairs. I'm pleased to report the dam is more stable and can safely hold more water. The threat of flooding in the Green River Valley has been reduced to one in twenty-five each year for the next ten years. This is good news; however, we are not out of danger yet.

While efforts were underway to repair the dam, Auburn, Kent, Tukwila, and King County began moving forward to reinforce levies and reduce the risk of flooding if the Army Corps of Engineers spilled more water out of the reservoir to protect the integrity of the dam.

At the same time, I was working each day to see that all agencies in state government were moving forward with plans to either assist in flood prevention, or preparing responses should a flood actually occur. There are 24,500 people and thousands of businesses that could be hurt by a major flood. We must plan for the worst.

We have put together excellent emergency preparedness plans and developed a new system of analyzing weather patterns when storms are still days away. There is now an alert and notification system that will give us the greatest opportunity to protect our citizens, businesses, communities, and state.

If you live or own a small business in this area, you are eligible to get National Flood Insurance, and if you're having trouble obtaining this insurance, call my office. For larger businesses, I'm currently working with insurance industry leaders, as well as the Insurance Commissioner's office, to ensure that the resources are available to provide adequate protection to cover the losses that a business might encounter should a flood occur.

If you have questions or need information at all, feel free to contact my office and I will assist in every way possible. I will continue doing everything I can to actually solve the problem, beginning with proper repairs to the Howard Hanson Dam. We must plan for the worst.

### Budget and Taxes

Like last session, the Legislature faces a major short-fall due to continued declining revenues. Although we faced a \$9 billion short-fall in the last legislative session, we still managed to pass a balanced budget with no general tax increases. Some cuts were a great idea, and some cuts were painful, but along with assistance from the federal government, we balanced the budget during a difficult recession.

Unfortunately, the impacts of the recession are not past. The balanced budget that we passed in April has now turned into a new additional \$2.6 billion shortfall due to a continued decline in revenues. There are no easy cuts. Public safety, education, public health, and transportation are all critically important.

This will take a lot of hard work, and partisan rhetoric won't do a single thing to actually solve the problem. Personally, I remain committed to the principle that a general tax increase while recovering from a recession is the wrong way to go.

### Education Matters

Education is one of the most important priorities I have in government. Last session, we managed to protect education from the worst of the cuts. While some areas of state government were slashed by eighteen percent or more, we managed to reduce the cuts to education on a state level to 2.4 percent. That meant bigger sacrifices elsewhere.